



NATIONAL GEOSPATIAL-INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

Office of Corporate Communications

nga.mil | 571-557-5400 | publicaffairs@nga.mil | FB: NatlGEOINTAgency | @NGA_GEOINT

**Remarks as Prepared for
Letitia A. Long
Director, National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency
for the
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Hello, everyone. I would like to personally thank Austin Yamada [Vice President, VT-ARC] for the generous invitation to visit the VT Applied Research Center and Tom McNamara [CEO, VT-ARC] for meeting with me today.

And on behalf of Doug [McGovern] and Dave [Bottom], I want to thank everyone for their hospitality. I always enjoy meeting with future technology leaders, especially in such an intimate setting like today. One of the first questions I am usually asked is, “How do I get a job at NGA?”

Perhaps some of you were waiting to ask a version of that very question. There are many different career opportunities at NGA, such as Advanced Visualization Specialists, Multimedia Specialists, Computer Scientists, photogrammetrists, Cartographers and Imagery Scientists, just to name a few. But despite the various job fields, there are some desired attributes that remain constant at NGA. I will share three with you today.

First, we want agile, adaptive and creative thinkers who confront the challenges of today and prepare for the opportunities of the future. Second, NGA wants a diversity of thought, which is why we strive to hire people from a variety of backgrounds. And finally, NGA requires servant leaders who are willing to take risks and be bold.

I will talk in more detail about each, but first, let me briefly explain who NGA is, what we do, and why we are rapidly transforming our Agency for the future.

Geospatial Intelligence – or GEOINT – is a highly evolved intelligence discipline that shows you what is happening, where it is happening, and when it is happening. It also reveals how it is happening, why it matters, and what may happen next. In the past, NGA had largely been a producer of static intelligence products – reports about what we know. But now, we are transforming into a provider of dynamic geospatial content, analysis and services.

Let me give you an example. Today, we are using a new intelligence methodology that allows us to anticipate and predict the future – called Activity Based Intelligence or ABI. Previously, we were concerned with monitoring the “known-knowns” – the who, what,

where, when, why and how. That worked during the Cold War – but not as well today. ABI makes a huge shift from looking at what we know, to looking for what we don't know. ABI enables analysts to discover “unknown-unknowns” in patterns of activity hidden in the huge amount of data we collect every day. These unknowns include hidden facilities or targets that adversaries would rather keep secret as well as “patterns of life” of how our adversaries act.

NGA is using advanced analytic tools and tradecraft – like ABI – to fulfill our mission to provide strategic warning, situational awareness, military operational planning, combat support and foundational GEOINT to our Nation's policymakers, warfighters, and first responders. And, although NGA has changed more than any intelligence agency in the past few years, we must accelerate our pace of change.

Why? Because, we face the most challenging environment I have seen in my 35 years as an intelligence professional. From combating external threats to adapting to budget uncertainty, rapid change is necessary. And it's our workforce – now and in the future – that drives that change. Let's go back to the three desired attributes I discussed earlier.

First, we want agile, adaptive and creative thinkers who confront the challenges of today and prepare for the opportunities of the future. Today, crisis has become the “new normal,” so our workforce must become more anticipatory and predictive to keep pace with unpredictable change. And as we continue to evolve our tradecraft through the implementation advanced analytic techniques and processes – we need highly-skilled people in place to bring these techniques to bear in order to produce the best GEOINT possible.

Second, NGA wants a diversity of thought, which is why we strive to hire people from various backgrounds.

A diverse workforce lends itself to better solutions, particularly in intelligence work. This means diversity in not only age, gender, or ethnicity, but diversity in experience and background as well. Leveraging this variety of perspectives is invaluable in solving our most challenging GEOINT problems.

Additionally, NGA has a strong commitment to closing the gap in STEM careers – particularly with women. Personally, I have two degrees in engineering: A bachelor's in electrical engineering from Virginia Tech, and a master's in mechanical engineering from Catholic University.

I worked as a college research intern with the David Taylor Naval Research Laboratory and spent my first six years in intelligence with the U.S. Navy analyzing acoustic signatures. I know how critically important STEM careers are to NGA's future success. As the current workforce retires, we need to recruit the best, brightest brains available, regardless of race, creed, gender, or physical impairment.

And finally, NGA requires servant leaders who are willing to take risks and be bold. What is servant leadership? Servant leaders seek to serve their team, the organization, the mission and the public – rather than expecting to be served by those they lead. Traditional leadership generally involves accumulating and exercising power by those at the “top of the pyramid”; servant leadership inverts the pyramid. Those at the top of the pyramid serve those who work hard every day to fulfill our mission, protect national security, and serve the public.

These servant leaders must also have the courage to stand up for their convictions. If our workforce is to drive change, we need people who are unafraid to speak up when they see something that needs to be fixed.

As I mentioned earlier, my career started as a college research intern, much like everyone in this room. I can tell you that being in this room puts you on the right path – whether your goal is to work for NGA, or elsewhere in the Department of Defense, Intelligence Community, or private sector.

Thank you and I look forward to seeing you in the future.

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